

to welcome to Ottawa at the beginning of December Mr. Sharett, the Foreign Minister of Israel, who came here at the invitation of the Prime Minister [Mr. St. Laurent]. I agree whole-heartedly with the hon. member for Prince Albert that our attitude should be "equal" but I doubt whether anyone would seriously contend that the criterion of such an attitude is an exact and prompt balancing of my journeys to foreign capitals. This "equality" which, as I say, I endorse, must rest on a sturdier basis than that.

In any event, during 1955 two cabinet ministers, two senators and six members of parliament visited Israel from Canada and each spent some time there. The members included the leaders of two parties, and, above all, they included the hon. member for Prince Albert himself. I am flattered, indeed, I am flabbergasted, by the suggestion that all of these visits by such distinguished Canadians were more than equalled by a day and a half stopover by me in Cairo on the way home from a Colombo Plan meeting.

My own discussions with Egyptian and Israeli leaders about the problem of the Middle East and my study of these problems, which I share with others in the House, have left me with the impression that, while the issues are complex and difficult, and even dangerous, there is a basic desire for peace on both sides because it is realized, it must be realized, that this is indispensable to social and economic progress. There seems, then, to be at least this foundation upon which a settlement could be reached.

I believe that the Western powers are ready and anxious-I know that Canada is-to assist in the achievement of a settlement. I hope sincerely that the Soviet Government and its friends are equally anxious. If they are, they will not stimulate and encourage an arms race in the Middle East which can have no good result, except for the political machinations of the stimulators. I agree, of course, with the hon. members for Winnipeg North that the way to blunt the machinations of those who seek to gain advantage from inflaming the troubles of the Middle East is to bring about peace there. I am sure any Canadian Government any government, would wish to do what it could, along with other similarly disposed governments, to assist in bringing about such a peace.

With all respect, however, I do not think that the speech of the hon. member for Winnipeg North made much of a contribution to that end. Among other things he complained of the "passionate admiration" of officials in the London foreign office for the Arabs. His own attitude seemed to me to be one of passionate hostility to the Arab governments. Passion on either side of this issue is not likely to help; indeed, it already has hindered and bedevilled the chances of a settlement. The hon. member implored this Government to pay a "more significant part" in bringing about such a settlement. The attitude he took